

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



### **Ring bells and launch butterflies**

*Betty Ford Alpine Gardens kicks off its 20th-anniversary summer season*

VAIL, Colo. (June 25, 2008) — America’s highest botanical garden kicks off its summer-long 20th-anniversary celebration next week.

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens announces Bells & Butterflies, a fun-filled afternoon of art, music, butterflies and garden tours on Monday, June 30, in Vail’s Ford Park, in partnership with the town of Vail’s Art in Public Places committee, and the Vail Jazz Foundation and Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival.

“We rejoice in this milestone with an afternoon of family activities,” says Ann Kurronen, the Gardens’ executive director. “Everyone is invited.”

From 2:30-4 p.m., activities include:

- The ninth annual “Summer of Sculpture” — Come see sculptured bells, ring the clappers, command the strikers, and meet the artist James G. Moore, a Colorado native, whose five bronze bells depict his love of the outdoors.
- *Plein Air* competition — Local artists paint their latest masterpieces, incorporating Moore’s bell-sculpture exhibit. Judges will select the top three paintings, which then will be put on display at Vail International Gallery. Sales will benefit the Gardens.
- A Butterfly Launch — Butterfly-related activities include games and the launching of Painted Lady butterflies recently hatched at the Gardens.
- Bravo’s Petting Zoo — Professional musicians help kids learn how to play musical instruments.
- Garden tours — Offered by Betty Ford Alpine Gardens staff and docents.
- Jazz 101 — An educational booth hosted by the Vail Jazz Foundation.

Then, at 4:30 p.m., Vail Mayor Dick Cleveland will unveil Betty Ford Way, the town’s newly named walkway surrounding Ford Park. “We are pleased to honor our namesake, former first lady Betty Ford, with a picturesque lane right near her Gardens,” says Kurronen.

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, at 8,250 feet above sea level in Vail’s Ford Park, is the highest botanical garden in the United States, and perhaps the world, providing free access to an estimated 100,000 visitors annually. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization for which operations and programs are funded entirely through the generosity of donors, its

mission is to inspire passion for plants in high-altitude communities through beautification, conservation, education and research programs.

Recognized as the foremost authority on high-altitude plants in natural and cultivated landscapes in the Rocky Mountains, Betty Ford Alpine Gardens not only contributes staff and expertise essential to conservation efforts throughout the region, it also provides an environment for rare, exotic and imperiled alpine wildflowers and plants. It also plays an important role in encouraging summertime flower displays throughout the Vail Valley at both private homes and businesses.

For the complete events schedule or more information about the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, call 970-476-0103 or visit [www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org](http://www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org).

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Cutline info for: **BFAG Moore bell-back.jpg**  
Sculptured bells, like this one, by Colorado artist James G. Moore, will be ringing Monday at Betty Ford Alpine Gardens as part of festivities celebrating the nonprofit's 20th anniversary.

*Credit: Photos courtesy Betty Ford Alpine Gardens.*

*(Note: Additional photos of the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens are available for download at [www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org](http://www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org), or upon request – SLW.)*